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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS
Baghdad's bombing dawn - Hurriyet
Bush: Victory or Nothing - Hurriyet
First missiles target Saddam, commanders - Hurriyet
. and U.S. strikes - Milliyet
First missiles to Baghdad, Basra at dawn - Milliyet
Delta force in Baghdad - Milliyet
Bush: Bring me [Saddam's] head - Sabah
Bush penalizes AKP: No \$ 6 billion - Sabah
U.S. sends home Incirlik personnel families - Turkiye
Iraqi minister: Death will welcome U.S., UK troops here -
Turkiye
U.S. won't give up Northern Front - Aksam
U.S. increases psychological pressure: 2 million flyers for
Iraqi troops - Vatan

OPINION MAKERS

U.S. troops enter Iraq, B-Plan up - Zaman
300,000 U.S., UK troops besiege Iraq - Cumhuriyet
New decree: No access to Incirlik AB - Cumhuriyet
Bush, Blair, Aznar: Sunken sailors - Yeni Safak
Saddam's time up - Radikal
Kurds flee to Turkey, Turks flee to west - Radikal
U.S.: No money for air corridor - Zaman

FINANCIAL JOURNALS

Markets take war position - Dunya
30,000 Northern Iraqis flee to Turkey, Iran - Finansal Forum

BRIEFING

Iraq: Today's late edition papers report that senior Iraqi leadership - Saddam, his sons and four commanders were targeted by the operation launched at 04.33 a.m. local time. Downtown Baghdad was not targeted, papers report and quote President Bush as saying 'We do not accept any outcome but victory. Civilians will not be hurt.' All papers report that 150,000 U.S. and UK troops have entered the demilitarized zone on the Kuwaiti border before the ultimatum to Saddam expired, papers say. President Bush has decided to launch the operation earlier after receiving from the Pentagon information that whereabouts of Saddam and his top aides had been located. President Bush is concerned that the operation 'might be tougher than estimated, and take longer,' reports say. A limited number of cruise missiles were used to target the Iraqi leadership. The Americans were careful to inflict minimum damage on Baghdad, papers quote international broadcasters' reporting. 'Milliyet' reports that commanders of the U.S. troops deployed in Kuwait were keeping up the spirits of their soldiers by encouraging them to put up 'a proud fight.' 'Iraqis are a decent nation, respect them. Don't question why you are here. You'll be welcomed as 'good boys' when you reach the North. Do your job and go back home. God is with you,' American commanders reportedly said.

Mainstream papers criticize the AKP government's indecisiveness regarding the Iraq crisis which, they believe, has incurred significant political, economic and

military risk for the country. Turkey has failed to guarantee a chair for the Turkomen in the post-war Iraq administration, has been deprived of the right to a military presence in Northern Iraq, and has missed the chance of \$26 billion of U.S. aid, they stress. Concerned about the looming war, Ankara was readying to give the nod to the U.S. However, President Bush rejected further Turkish demands and rejected Turkey's opening its soil for U.S. troops by saying it was 'too late,' papers emphasize. Erdogan has suffered a heavy defeat in his first test. Papers say that the U.S. punished the AKP government. "Hurriyet" says the U.S. and Turkey have agreed that Turkish troops will enter Northern Iraq to halt a possible wave of refugees, and that aircraft belonging to the U.S.-led coalition will be given overflight rights, but U.S. troops will not be stationed in Turkey. The paper slams the government for failing to reach a profitable agreement and then caving in to U.S. demands for overflight. "Aksam" highlights remarks by U/S State Grossman saying that the U.S. could extend a compensation fee to Turkey if the GOT takes steps forward after the decree is approved. Aksam draws attention to the considerable amount of Turkish land rented by Americans on the Iraqi border, and the ongoing military equipment transport to the border provinces. The paper sees this as indicative of long term U.S. plans regarding Iraq. A government decree granting a six months access to Turkish airspace for the U.S.-led coalition aircraft is to be sent to the parliament on Wednesday. The motion would authorize temporary Turkish military presence in Northern Iraq to control refugees and prevent activities of the separatist Kurdish group PKK/KADEK. Once the air corridor is opened to coalition planes, ONW flights will be suspended, reports say.

EDITORIAL OPINION: The War on Iraq

"Possibility for change"

Murat Yetkin lists the disadvantages due to Turkish government's belated act in liberal-intellectual Radikal (3/20): "The crisis management of the AKP government presented a failure. It seems Ankara did not realize the change of tone in Washington. While the AKP government engaged in bargaining plans for additional financial aid with Washington prior to the parliament's authorization, Secretary Powell, by asking only permission for the

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overflights, closed the door for economic aid. . In sum, the government acted like an amateur player who shows the cards in his hand to the other side. . At this point, Turkey cannot afford to decline the US request for overflight because this will only pose a heavy blow on the Turkish-American ties for the last 50 years. The current picture can be depicted as follows:

- The US has given up the northern front option from Turkey. The ongoing site modernization might be used for possible humanitarian reasons or rescue operations.
- There are conflicting statements about the Turkish presence in northern Iraq. Turkish government sources say that in exchange for the overflight permission, Secretary Powell accepted in principle the Turkish military presence in northern Iraq. However, the American sources say that Turkish incursion into northern Iraq should only be for the humanitarian purposes and carried away with non-combatting troops. It seems the basic worries earlier expressed by the Turkish Chief of General Staff General Staff General are happening.
- The government says that the agreement for political and military cooperation with the US remains valid, but the recent agreement reached with the Iraqi opposition looks like something written on ice.
- The government announced that Washington was going to make a statement for economic support, and it was in fact a three-paragraph statement issued by the US Embassy in Ankara. The US just repeated the stereotype rhetorical support for Turkey and that it would continue as long as the economic program is implemented. Hopes for up to \$24 billion American loans for Turkey however faded away. . According to the Ankara observers, lots of things can change prior to the debate on allowing overflights and the vote in the parliament."

"It is too late for Turkey"

Yalcin Dogan notes that Turkey cannot be a part of the northern front even if it wants to be, in the mass appeal Hurriyet (3/20): "Even if Turkey grants the necessary permission, the transfer of US troops from Turkey to northern Iraq will take at least two weeks. Because of the lateness in the action, the US seems not consider such possibility as an option any more. With the exception of overflight permission, the authorization for the deployment of troops or their transit movement from Turkish soil will not do any good to the US, militarily speaking. Oddly

enough, the AKP government is not aware of this fact, and still tries to bargain with the US. . As clearly seen at the ATC meetings, the Washington administration is being extremely distant to Ankara. In fact, Washington is making fun of the AKP government. The government might be faced with immediate consequences on April 24 ("Armenian Genocide" Day). Let's not be surprised at all if the Congress suddenly decides to pass the Armenian resolution."

PEARSON